pmann, Grant and Ashton
in Cinderella

January 1950 one shilling

PETER WILLIAMS, the Editor, is a Cornishman whose interest in ballet started at the age of 7, when he first saw the Diaghilev company. After leaving school, he trained as a dress-designer, having his own business until the war. In 1945 *he went to Jantzen as their head designer, leaving in* 1947 *to become assistant editor of* Ballet and Opera *and to design for the theatre. For the ballet, he designed among others,* Designs with Strings *and Metropolitan's* Prince Igor. *With Andrée Howard he created* Selina *for Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. This year he wrote the book of* Pleasuredrome *for which Rosella Hightower did the choreography; was recently commissioned by* Illustrated *to write about this ballet.*

We, You, They

THIS is not just another ballet paper, though it is certain that ballet will feature to no mean extent. Our title—DANCE AND DANCERS—is self explanatory. Whenever and wherever Dancers dance we hope to be there. Ballet is not such a large segment of that seductive apple, dance, as many people are apt to think. True ballet is the ultimate form of theatrical dance presentation, but to reach its present revered state it has gone through many refineries and become admixed with the arts of literature and painting until frequently the original mainspring, dance, has been neglected altogether. It is, therefore, equally important to consider many of the less refined phases of this development. Dancing in musical plays, films and television will play a large part in the future of this paper as well as the dancing of all peoples, inspired by man's natural desire to express himself in movement.

There is only one person who can make the dance possible—The Dancer. It is our intention to introduce dancers to you so that by knowing something of their background you will more easily be able to assess their true value.

If this sounds dull reading, there is no need to worry for we have always at our beck and call, those Court jesters—Scandal and Gossip. Whenever we feel that we are becoming ponderous we shall not hesitate to summon them for it is they, after all, who make dancing one of the lively arts.

You, too, O patient reader, will be allowed to raise your voice and ride your hobby-horse through our pages. How often have we heard you say that you have messages of vital importance to the world? You have always been so keen on airing your views in the foyer, the Crush Bar and round draughty stage-doors. Now, you can write it all down and we can only hope that our Guardian Angels are in the vicinity.

All these slightly pompous statements are a means of introducing ourselves to you and of trying to explain our "policy" (that dreary word that always seems to mean something that is never adhered to). We hope to give you what you want and that you will tell us what you want. We should like to make it quite clear that you will never find in our pages anything on Ballroom dancing (*Dancing Times*, please note!); Jolly scribbly drawings (*Ballet and Opera*, please note!); Instructive articles on how to make festive table decorations out of old ballet shoes (*Vogue, House and Gardens*, please note!); Nostalgic Nosegays; Patterns for making practice costumes out of old dusters. In short, we hope to be informative, irrelevant, and indefatigable.

*

THE midnight hags have been working overtime. On their jet-propelled broomsticks they have hurtled through the night sky from Hampstead to Hammersmith, from Bloomsbury to Bayswater and from Kensington to Kensal Rise. The chill autumn air has made their harsh cackle sound like crushed icicles—"THEY hate *Cinderella*—"THEY thought *Symphonic Variations* was sentimental Balanchine"—"My dear, she travelled round the world doing her 32 *fouettés*." Yes, they had quite a time, those panderers to the Great God THEY.

Why should people spend their time finding tiny faults when there is so much to make us proud?

We got in quite a state about the reception that America would give Sadler's Wells. It seemed to matter terribly what THEY thought. So often have we heard THEM round the Covent Garden Crush Bar, complaining that "the whole thing was ghastly." We almost began to believe it ourselves. After the first news of New York's great reception, reaction set in and it was then that the witches started their midnight mass.

It is hard to discover the general reaction. But out of it all, two things emerge clearly—an enormous personal triumph for Fonteyn, who was called "a ballerina among ballerinas" (whatever that may mean)—and the recognition of the value of superb organisation.

DAVID RAHER, assistant editor, is an American dancer whose ability to write was disclosed when he submitted articles for publication to the editors of Ballet and Opera. *Born and educated in New York City, his studies were concentrated on art and writing. These were temporarily abandoned for a dancing career. Subsequently appearing in a number of hit musicals including* Bloomer Girl *and* Carousel, *he then joined the Ballet International in* 1944 *and finally the Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo in* 1947. *Eager to return to writing, he left the de Cuevas company to take up his present appointment.*

Contributors

London-born CARYL BRAHMS has been the London Evening Standard *ballet critic since the war; before that she was on the* Daily Telegraph. *With the late S. J. Simon she wrote* Bullet in the Ballet *and* Six Curtains for Stroganova, *probably the first novels on ballet, certainly the first humorous ones. Her more serious works on ballet include* Footnotes to the Ballet *and* Robert Helpmann, Choreographer; *she is just completing a book intended as a guide to new ballet-goers, called* A Seat at the Ballet. *Miss Brahms can be seen at any ballet first-night, and at Covent Garden in the front row of the Stalls Circle round on the prompt side.*

EVAN SENIOR, Australian-born journalist and critic. Studied ballet and music from an early age; was associated with several Australian newspapers and magazines as music, ballet and theatre critic; is now London representative of The Australian Musical News, *reporting on music and ballet.*

TATLOCK MILLER has come to London from Australia as overseas art and ballet critic for Associated Australian Newspapers and to edit Royal Album, *a symposium on the royal residences and their collections.*
In Australia he edited a quarterly magazine devoted to the arts, a book dealing with the Ballet Rambert's tour there and a special book on the Old Vic Theatre Company.

HOWARD BYRNE, American colour photographer who produced this month's cover, is an old hand at getting pictures to editors ahead of the news. Last fall, Byrne shrewdly calculated that the Sadler's Wells visit to the U.S. would attract world-wide interest and spent four weeks photographing their repertoire in colour before they flew to New York. Recent events have more than vindicated his hunch.

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Dance and Dancers

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MERSEY HOUSE, 132-4, FLEET ST., LONDON, E.C.4.

New York critics on the Wells

ON the night of October 9, 1949, one of the smartest audiences in the history of New York's first nights, gathered together at the Metropolitan Opera House to welcome our Sadler's Wells Ballet. They saw the full-length *Sleeping Beauty* for the first time; they saw the result of De Valois' twenty years labour for the first time; they saw Margot Fonteyn for the first time. That night has gone down in the pages of ballet history, for it has finally proved to the western world that England can produce dancers. Fonteyn, the first completely British-made ballerina *assoluta*, has had a success that is almost unknown on this side of the Atlantic.

The above action photographs by Roger Wood, show her in the Rose *Adagio* from the first Act, which is how the Metropolitan audience must have seen her for the first time on that night. The whole visit has been a triumphant one, though, as was to be expected, certain ballets were not so popular as others. On the next page and on subsequent pages through the issue, we publish what some of the leading American critics said about our repertoire. This by no means represents public opinion, but it is interesting when compared with what our own critics have said about their National Ballet.

256508

New York critics on the Wells

Sleeping Beauty

The organisation's production of the three-act The Sleeping Beauty *captures in its settings and in its stage effects much of the sweeping majestic beauties from the unlikely fantasies one sees in the extravagant ballet lithographs of an earlier day.*

As it should have been, star of the evening was the company's prima ballerina, Margot Fonteyn. She is a lovely dancer, light as down in aerial movements, clean and sharp in the delineation of body lines and precise in the accomplishing of miniature steps and gestures.

Walter Terry—N.Y. Herald Tribune.

Such an ensemble performance as was shown last night in The Sleeping Beauty *could not conceivably be achieved except by a company which works together all the year round, with financial and artistic security and a set of high ideals about what it is doing. It is with a great feeling of comfortableness that one relaxes before an aggregation of dancers so sure of themselves technically, so impeccably rehearsed and so unified in approach.*

John Martin—N.Y. Times.

These dancing Britons are splendid. I have not seen such precision among a foreign ensemble since the Tiller Girls came from overseas many years ago and inspired the Roxy Theatre and Radio City Music Hall wenches. The principal dancers, including Margot Fonteyn, Beryl Gray and Robert Helpmann, are beautifully schooled. The physical production—scenery and costumes—is elaborate and handsome.

John Chapman—Daily News.

Sadler's Well ballet scored a hit all right. It may have some star dancers, but the company is the thing, one hails it for restoring equilibrium to ballet performance.

Miles Kastendieck—Journal American.

Cinderella

Mr. Ashton seems to have been concerned mostly with picture card groupings, which fortunately are occasionally relieved by enlivening dance episodes and the low-comedy antics entrusted to Cinderella's stepsisters (Mr. Ashton and Robert Helpmann). The company of dancers, however, worked splendidly with the same unity and precision one had previously noted.

Robert Bagar—N.Y. World Telegram.

Britton and Boulton in Popular Song from Facade *(Photo: Mandinian)*

For all its elaborate choreography by Frederick Ashton, the earnest but east bound music of Prokofieff and the décor of Jean Denis Malcles, it remains a fragmentary experience, possessed by any number of interesting details but also a palpable lack of fantasy and that warming quality loosely defined as inspiration.

Irving Kilodin—N.Y. Sun.

In effect Mr. Ashton has crossed an old Petipa Ballet with an English Christmas pantomime, embellishing it, of course, with his own good taste and characteristically excellent invention. When it is at its best in either of these departments it is admirable but if it were stripped of all its dead wood, both musical and choreographic, it would run considerably less than the two and a half hours it undertakes to fill.

John Martin—N.Y. Times.

The Rake's Progress

Besides a highly vivid score by Gavin Gordon, The Rake's Progress *owes its sustained power to the neatly stylized dance patterns of Ninette de Valois. One watched the whole set of Hogarth canvasses come to mordant life.*

Louis Biancolli.

Miss de Valois has done a magnificent job in extending Hogarthian scenes into three dimensional movements and in giving inefutably right animation to the characters and caricatures who people his scenes.

Walter Terry—N.Y. Herald Tribune.

Rake has choreography by Ninette de Valois—an imaginative, dreamy, varied series of patterns so exactly and wisely counterpointed that one hopes Miss de Valois will like America well enough to refuse to go home.

Robert Sylvester—Daily News.

Miss de Valois has taken the famous Hogarth cycle of paintings and made a richly flavoured, rowdy and boisterous dramatic sequence of them, set four-square to the sturdy score of Gavin Gordon. If it is not a ballet in the strict sense of the word, however, it is wholly choreographic.

John Martin—N.Y. Times.

Wedding Bouquet

It gets inspiration from Gertrude Stein, some humour and some aimlessness in the choreography of Frederick Ashton, and vitality from the company's performance.

Miles Kastendieck—Journal American.

There was much cleverness and a piquant travesty humour to A Wedding Bouquet, *which boasts a text by Gertrude Stein.*

Robert Bagar—N.Y. World Telegram.

This light and frothy work by Frederick Ashton helped along by lines from Gertrude Stein, with music, scenery and costumes by Lord Berners, was fun, attenuated in spots, but disarmingly zany.

Walter Terry—N.Y. Herald Tribune.

Shearer and Ashton in Facade, *one of the most popular works with the New York audience*

Symphonic Variations

There is much fine invention in it, for Mr. Ashton is a gifted choreographer, but it emerges as sentimental and without any great formal compulsion. It was beautifully danced, however, by Miss Fonteyn, Miss Shearer, Michael Somes (whom we had not seen before), Brian Shaw and John Hart.

John Martin—N.Y. Times.

Symphonic Variations, *most memorable because it introduces briefly the purely beautiful and unbelievably accomplished Margot Fonteyn.*

Robert Sylvester—Daily News.

Cesar Franck's music proved excellent background for the quiet classicism of Frederick Ashton's Symphonic Variations. *An air of casualness almost concealed the terrific show of technique.*

Louis Biancolli.

Façade

In Mr. Ashton's choreography William Walton's music of Facade *was turned into a round of good clean fun, the Scotch, Swiss, Polka, Waltz and Tango sequences offering some of the tidiest technique in seasons.*

Everything about Facade *was unpretentious, gay and irresistible.*

Walter Terry—N.Y. Herald Tribune.

It is witty, light-fingered and smart; the music of William Walton and the décor and costumes of John Armstrong are equally so, and the performance by Mr. Ashton, Moira Shearer, Rosemary Lindsay, Anne Heaton, Brian Shaw, Michael Boulton, and the others is elegant perfection.

John Martin—N.Y. Times.

continued page six

CARYL BRAHMS ON . . .

THE CRITIC

THE function of the critic is not to be a Press Agent—not to have truck with the publicising of dancer or danced in any way other than that of assessing quality.

No dancer, choreographer or director who is not a great artist—modest yet assured—will ever understand this. Indeed, the dancer commonly refers to a press notice as a "write-up"—that is, if it is a good notice. If it is bad she is apt to announce hurriedly that she never reads the silly things—this does not, of course, prevent her from cutting the critic.

The function of the critic is to be in no way swayed from his judgment, which he must base solely on what passes upon the stage on the occasion he is recording.

He must not be influenced by what the dancer has achieved, or where fallen short, on some other occasion, save only for reasons of comparison. He must not be affected by his personal relations, be they loving or lethal, with the dancer.

He must write handsomely and with conviction unimpaired in the very claws of death, unmoved by the hissing and curdling all around him. Nor must he allow himself to be lured into silence by the personal charm of that professional supplier of the rosiest of glasses (in goblet form), the Public Relations Officer; nor diverted from his theme by the mere threat of not being allowed in to write it, a bid optimistically made by some umbrageous management livid over the critic's last summary.

What's more, once he has achieved his seat, he must not allow himself to be aware that the slightest *contretemps* occurred.

He must be on his guard against having his silence bought by the flattery of being "consulted" on this point or that. He must not let himself be gagged by the "leetle loonch", the smaller supper or even the teensy diamond clip.

He must certainly remain good-humouredly oblivious to the fact that to try to bribe a critic is to insult him. In fact, a good critic will have no feelings—save those of pleased surprise when the ballet is good and surprised displeasure when it isn't.

The critic is the mouthpiece of his paper, there to give an informed account of the ballet for the benefit of the reader. Not the Dancer. Not the Director. Not the Box Office Manager. To act as guide in the intricacies of the work; to hold the balance between the intention of the choreographer, designer and composer, and the interpretation of this intention by the performers.

He is the prophet of those unpopular mysteries, the counsels of perfection, and his object is to arrive at an understanding of the reasons why these have not at some points been achieved.

My formula

I have laid out below a few of the questions I sit and ask myself while my carefree readers clap *Carmen*, swoon through *Symphonic Variations*, or claim that the ballet about Œdipus is Greek to them. It must never be Greek to me. Or, if it is, I must be able to construe it in a reasonably cultured manner.

To avoid these questions for any reason is to break faith with the reader and with the art. But of course to ask them does not necessarily mean to answer them categorically in print—not in this year of space. However, the answers to the questions will provide the basis on which the criticism is written.

Let us apply them to a performance of *Les Sylphides* by the Wells:

1. Is the ballet good of its kind? Unhesitatingly, yes.
2. Is it a good kind? The best.
3. Is the score danceable, musicianly, evocative, rhythmically interesting, theatrically effective? Eminently danceable, very evocative, moderately musicianly—the orchestration is coarse.
4. Is the choreography lovely in line, clear in statement, subtle or striking and capable of holding perpetual delight? Lovely, clear, subtle and durable choreography—probably the most delightful ever to be created for a ballet.
5. Does the décor create the right atmosphere? Does the costume reveal or obscure the line of the dancer? Costumes simple, effectively helpful—probably the loveliest designed for a romantic ballet. Backcloth a bit stark.
6. Is the dancer fulfilling the intention of choreographer and composer? The ballerina (Fonteyn) yes. The *corps-de-ballet*—I doubt it. The male dancer (Mr. Smith) Migawd! Is this the fault of Mr. Smith or Fokine? Both.

That is the basis for judgment. Now for the notice:

Les Sylphides, a ballet to music by Chopin, orchestrated by Gordon Jacob, with choreography by Fokine and décor by Benois, was revived last night at Covent Garden.

(*We begin with a forthright statement—a little stark, but concise, accurate and space-saving.*)

What is this ballet of the shade of Chopin in sempiternal colloquy with the spirit of his Valse? Is it a sigh breathed in choreography? Is it the summoning of a score of mist-made Taglionis, winged, wreathed and satin shod, to recreate their graceful rites before his grave? Or is it a collection of jolly good sorts, doing their best to look pi, the poetry drilled out of them? Alas, there is little doubt that at the Wells, the last shall come first.

(*We now go on to show some grasp of the reason for this.*)

For a National Ballet, like a National Debt, has the defects of its virtues and the dancers of the Wells, so faultlessly academic, so admirably disciplined, so well-behaved and colourless, lack the spontaneity of the poem in choreography. From this lack of poesy we can, happily, except Miss Fonteyn, most musical of ballerinas, who makes up in her fluent ease and pleasing simplicity for what she lacks in the noble mode.

(*Now we must ask ourselves why Miss Fonteyn lacks the grand manner.*)

The language of modern ballet, which she has done so much to create in this country, is, after all, a colloquial rather than a measured utterance.

(*So much for the dancing. But stay—we have said no word of the* Danseur Noble. *Is this perhaps the kinder course? Or is it?*)

If the *Mazurka* at the flaccid feet of Mr. Smith was more like the self-expression of some elderly Lord Fauntleroy kidding himself he's just another Peter Pan, the fault may not lie entirely with the dancer. Fokine did not exert himself in the matter of invention for the male variation.

Here, the choreography does not achieve the perfect communion with the composer's thought as in the passages for ballerina. Moreover, good as we are at producing the actor-dancer we in this country do not seem to get the excellent results in the teaching of our male dancers that they do in France and America.

(*Next décors.*)

An abiding problem for the company who present *Les Sylphides*—and this, of course, means every company—is that of the ballet's decoration. In *Les Sylphides*, Benois created the apotheosis of the romantic ballet costume, but his backcloth lacks atmosphere in the Wells realisation. The ruins are there, most formidably so; but where is the misted glade, part recognised and part imagined?

A lighter treatment of leaves, a more romantic romanticism of the ruins, might possibly serve the composer better, and the floating tulle-clad spirits of the dance.

(*Now music.*)

The music would be even more evocative, its original forms for solo pianoforte more exactly preserved, if Gordon Jacob had orchestrated the pieces more delicately. Indeed, it would be interesting to hear the music arranged as a concerto for piano, strings and woodwind.

(*Finally, the playing of the orchestra—if only to give them something to cut.*)

The orchestra sounded somewhat ragged under the baton of Mr. Toscarolli Jones and I fancy I detected an entrance for mattress spring, which I do not recollect meeting in Mr. Jacob's score.

Your turn now

There it is—our notice, based on the answers to our questions, supplied from our informed background, in something less than 500 words.

Easy, you say. You could write a better notice of *Les Sylphides* yourself?

Very well, then. Go ahead and write it for me.

I have asked the Editor to give the writer of the best notice of one of the following ballets: *Les Sylphides*, *La Sylphide*, *Le Jeune Homme et La Mort*, *The Rake's Progress*, *Giselle* or *Selina*, two seats for ballet at the Royal Opera House at a level no higher than the Grand Tier and no nearer than the sixth row of the stalls. And I hope you both enjoy the evening as much as I would.

Entries, which must reach me at this office by first post on Monday, January 24, marked *Competition* in the top left corner of the envelope and addressed to Caryl Brahms, c/o. Dance and Dancers, Mersey House, 132-4, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4, should not exceed 500 words.

And do not forget that to salute a master of the dance in a dancing masterpiece is the happiest of all the functions of the critic.

CURTAIN UP!

THE theatre cat at the Sarah Bernhardt has ideas above his station. A friend tells me that the other night during a performance of *Lac des Cygnes*, he took it into his head to wander on during the *adagio* and was fascinated by Hightower and Eglevsky (aren't we all?).

When it came to the *promenade* and *arabesque* the cat sat right under Hightower looking wistfully up at her. At this point the audience, who up to then had suppressed any outward laughter, burst its banks; Hightower got a fit of giggles and this famous Romantic love scene rather lost its atmosphere of Medieval Bavarian gloom.

The cat, quite unperturbed, walked slowly round the stage and off. Owing to the great success of this performance I hear rumours that the Covent Garden cat is considering making its debut in the last act of the *Sleeping Beauty*, in place of its pseudo brothers and sisters.

I hear the fabulous Marquis de Cuevas has added a further instalment to his own legend. He wanted to choreograph a ballet, so got 'Frisco Spanish dancer, Ana Ricarda, to help him. This new master work was to be called *Anniversaire*, said to commemorate John Taras' year as *Maître de Ballet* with the company.

However, things did not work out as expected, so David Lichine was called in; but after a few rehearsals the whole thing was given over to Massine. Not even the world's greatest choreographer could improve the broth that had been stirred by three cooks, so the whole affair was dropped. I am now waiting patiently for new works by Sol Hurok, Colonel de Basil and David Webster.

*

SASCHA RODZIANKO of the de Cuevas company, has got himself into a car smash and was badly cut about. If it had not been for the fact that he married pretty Anna Cheselka in the summer, I would say it had been a bad year for him. Am I right or did I dream up the fact that he got involved in a bit of trouble at Covent Garden last summer? Maybe I just dreamed it up after all.

*

SO many rumours have been flying around about the Markova-Dolin "walk-out" from the Palais de Chaillot that I have gone to a good deal of trouble to find out the truth. It seems that the two great English dancers arrived in Paris to join the company and the first thing they saw was Toumanova's *Giselle*.

It bore only slight resemblance to any production, in which they had appeared, of that old classic. They quite rightly insisted on several rehearsals—for the *corps*, for the orchestra, for the lighting, and for themselves.

Markova had not appeared in Paris since the war, and it was imperative that everything should be just right. But rehearsals are not easy at the Chaillot and it is almost impossible to "get the stage" for it is continually cluttered up by concerts and dancing displays.

However, at last, after a lot of trouble a day was fixed when the stage was clear and everybody could be there at the right time—but fate walked in disguised as the Paris Electricity Company (or whatever it is called). It was one of those days when all the electricity is cut off.

After that it was quite impossible to arrange anything further and the party was off! Markova was heartbroken, the de Cuevas company were heartbroken, the whole thing ended in tears. If anyone is to blame it is the Paris Electricity.

*

THE Opera Comique own the French rights of de Falla's *Le Tricorne* and they refused to allow the de Cuevas company to use the orchestration, with the result that Massine, Toumanova and Lichine had to dance to a single piano, when the ballet was given at the Sarah Bernhardt Theatre.

A lot of trouble seems to be caused by this withholding of orchestral rights; after all, the de Cuevas company are only visitors and it is unlikely they would affect the box-office of the National French Opera. I remember an occasion when London was deprived of seeing what would have been the best production of *Petrouchka* since the war, owing to this same lack of generosity.

*

ANDRÉE HOWARD tells me that she is working on the choreography for a pantomime. The children are supposed to be bears, and Andrée spent a long time showing them how to be old, old bears and felt that she was meeting with a certain amount of success. After a couple of hours of concentrated work, one small child came up to her and said, "Please, miss, are we supposed to be bears or mice?" Which all goes to prove that even the best of us can be a bit shaky when it comes to Natural History.

And talking about that subject reminds me of an occasion a few weeks ago when I attended an excellent lecture by one of our more eminent ballet critics. After the lecture came question time and some person at the back of the hall asked, "what company first gave *Peter and the Wolf*?" "Well," replied our critic, "had you been old enough you would have seen it with the Diaghilev company." I am afraid that it must have been a fox in wolf's clothing that our critic really saw.

Contributions to CURTAIN UP! are invited and, if used, will be paid for at our usual rates.

Read also

BALLET

published monthly and edited by

RICHARD BUCKLE

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ANTON DOLIN on Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet

(Junior Company)

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Continued from page 4

Hamlet

It is a marvel of dramatic composition, not only ingenious in conception but completely gripping.

John Martin—N.Y. Times.

Centre of gravity was reached last night with Robert Helpmann's gripping mimed version of Hamlet, *in which the crescendo of terror was compactly mirrored in a flashback of the dying Dane.*

Louis Biancolli.

It lasts only 24 *minutes and manages, to this observer at least, to be the most practical rewrite of Shakespeare ever attempted.*

Robert Sylvester—Daily News.

Swan Lake

Margot Fonteyn is, and I am happy to be unequivocal about this, the greatest Swan Queen I have ever seen.

Walter Terry—N.Y. Herald Tribune.

In all respects—choreographic, technical and visual—the performance out-ranked all previous attempts in the classic field.

N.Y. World Telegram.

The performance itself is as exquisite as the production, and Margot Fonteyn is, of course, its bright and shining star.

John Martin—N.Y. Times.

Apparitions

However graceful it is, the story gets in the way and the music sounds too lush for comfort. The audience experienced a let down.

Miles Kastendieck—Journal America.

Cecil Beaton has set the work entirely in white and has costumed it prettily, in much the same degree of shallowness that marks Mr. Ashton's approach.

John Martin—N.Y. Times.

It is a handsome production and one which the company dances beautifully but the insipidness of its romantic qualities shadowed those more diverting elements of fantasy which managed to emerge from time to time.

Walter Terry—N.Y. Herald Tribune.

Miracle in the Gorbals

Here is the apotheosis of the "street scene" ballet—of which we have seen more than a few—conceived with telling force by Helpmann and wonderfully executed by the ensemble.

Irving Kolodin—N.Y. Sun.

It is done in dramatic rather than choreot graphic terms, and there can be no doubt that the stagefull of people is skilfully handled. Buthere is surely not a cliché missed or a platitude avoided.

John Martin—N.Y. Times.

Robert Helpmann, the choreographer of Miracle in the Gorbals, *has created a work of remarkable integrity, both in its conveyance of emotions and in the simplicity of its movement details. There are, it must be admitted, some artificial passages, some contrived poses that jar an otherwise forthright exposition of a touching theme, but in the main the passion is realized in stirring yet believable terms.*

Walter Terry—N.Y. Herald Tribune.

COVER STORY

On December 23, *Cinderella* will be a year old. We chose our cover to celebrate this occasion, to welcome home the Sadler's Wells Ballet, and because the subject is seasonable. On Boxing Day it will again be possible to see this work at Covent Garden for two weeks.

THE three figures in Howard Byrne's cover photograph need no introduction either as people or in the roles they are playing. *Cinderella* had its first performance by Sadler's Wells Ballet at Covent Garden, on the night before Christmas Eve, 1948. The curtain rose on two sisters, two dizzy fantastic creatures who embodied all the faults of woman.

Vain, scheming, ostentatious, capricious and selfish they were, these two—yet we loved them. We loved them above the glitter and grandeur of scenes that transported us through the Seasons to the Land of Ice, to the Ballroom and the Palace Gardens.

The touching love of the handsome Prince for the sentimental slattern, seemed but a shadowy thing compared with the antics of these tawdry paradise birds. England took them to her all-ballet-embracing bosom and the spectacle, designed primarily as a Christmas entertainment, continued to fill the theatre until the leaves were on the trees and had fallen off again.

The old story of virtue rewarded; the story that is, in fact, the epitome of all our hopes and dreams, has again raised its moralising head and *Cinderella* becomes an all-the-year-round favourite.

When the ballet was taken to Italy, to the Florence Festival, in the Spring, the Italians loved it—which was quite understandable as English pantomime is the true descendant of their native Commedia dell' Arte; in America they neither knew nor understood the ramifications of the traditional conventions.

The dominating and domineering sister in purple is Australian-born Robert Helpmann, whose varied roles in the theatre rival the metamorphosis of Jupiter—dancer, choreographer, actor, film-star (not necessarily the same thing as an actor), imitator and wit. It is impossible to predict what form his next appearance will take.

Jester, Alexander Grant, is a New Zealander and the leading character dancer of the Sadler's Wells Ballet. Although he had been with the company for some years, it was not until he danced the Barber in Massine's *Mam'zelle Angot* that he really made his presence felt. For him, Massine created the leading role in his *Clock Symphony* (the ballet that every critic regrets being so rude about). Grant always enhances minor roles, such as the Dandy in *Le Tricorne* and the Tarantella dancer in *La Boutique Fantasque*. In the large classical works such as *Coppelia* and *Lac des Cygnes* he dances the Czardas, investing these occasionally deadly numbers with a verve and precision that turns them into something really exciting. Ashton was right to give him the Jester's role in *Cinderella*; his variation frequently stops the show in one of the duller parts of the Ballroom scene.

The third figure in yellow is, of course, Frederick Ashton, whose genius is responsible for not only creating the ballet but also turning this timid and repressed spinster into the leading role. Before the first night, Ashton had little time to think about his own part as he was far too busy on the production as a whole—he would just be the colourless "feed" for Helpmann, cover his face with "Number 5," and not be noticed.

Anyone in that first-night audience willing to accept it as such, learnt the lesson of how "under-playing" can win the day. There is something unbelievably touching about his performance, and at the end when he sadly shuffles off with Sister Helpmann—extremely moving. *Cinderella* is the crowning achievement, to date, in Ashton's career; a career that has been built up gradually until to-day he is England's leading choreographer and one of the foremost in the world.

Margot Fonteyn was unable to dance the title role in Cinderella *until February* 25 *of this year, owing to a sprained ankle sustained on the first night of the season. On that night and at subsequent performances she threw a new light on this rather elusive role and on her own many-sided qualities. She made Cinderella the heroine we all want to meet.*

The above photograph by Baron shows her in her First Act costume.

(*Photos: Lido*)

ROSELLA HIGHTOWER: GRAND BALLET DE MONTE CARLO

I REMEMBER Boris Kochno once telling me that the difference between Diaghilev dancers and the dancers of today, was that Diaghilev dancers never stopped learning until the day they stopped dancing; most dancers today think they know everything at the age of 21.

If this is true, and I am sure it is, then the great man would have approved of Rosella Hightower. She has reached her exalted position through sheer hard work and the knowledge that her every performance can be improved upon.

She was born in Oklahoma on January 30, 1920. Her family knew little of the ballet and had certainly no chance of seeing it. Rosella was brought up by two young aunts who would take her to all the local theatres and music halls.

When they returned from these excursions, Rosella would imitate everything she had seen and heard, her family often joining in. Her mother bought a piano and tried to teach Rosella to play but these lessons proved unsuccessful.

Not long after this, a girl next door started a ballet class for all the immediate neighbours and it was here that Rosella first became interested in the art that was to become her life work, though as she had never seen a company in action she had little idea of the vast colourful horizon that would open before her.

Her studies were interrupted by the fact that she had to go to school and, here, all thought of dancing was forgotten; she played and enjoyed all the games usually reserved for boys such as baseball and basketball.

Never did she take part in the usual plays and dancing displays that are frequently the jumping-off ground for actors and dancers; she was far more keen on playing hearty games with the boys.

In 1933, the family moved to Kansas City and she had a chance of seeing what a large ballet company really looked like, for the De Basil Company frequently appeared there.

The first programme she saw consisted of *Les Sylphides*, *Aurora's Wedding*, *Danses Slaves et Tziganes* and *Prince Igor*, with the, then, baby ballerinas—Toumanova, Baronova and Riabouchinska.

Little did she realise that one day she would be co-starring with at least two of these immortal three. In Kansas City, also, she took class with Miss Dorothy Perkins, who remained her teacher until 1938.

Rosella has the greatest admiration for this teacher, who was entirely responsible for her solid background of classical training. A Masonic company, the Shriners, sponsored programmes of ballet by Miss Perkins, for which she did the choreography.

These ballets were frequently very elaborate and one which Rosella remembers vividly consisted of a huge tree covered with pendant cocoons. These drifted to earth and opened to reveal a dancer-butterfly in each.

It seems that Miss Perkins had a great gift for arranging student ballets, as many of them were far better than some of the more pretentious works that Rosella has appeared in since.

During the eight years that she was in Kansas City, she paid a three-month's visit to New York where she studied with Fokine and Vilzak. Here is her first link with the great tradition for these two masters were, at various times, the mainstay of the Diaghilev company.

She admired Fokine for his wonderful lyricism and the new *enchaînement* he invented in class. The time had now arrived for Rosella to get a job and Massine, then looking for new dancers for his Monte Carlo Ballet (the company he formed after his break with De Basil), auditioned and accepted her.

On January 30 (her birthday), 1938, she left America for the first time to join the company in Monte Carlo.

At first she did little more than walk on,

continued on page 15

MARILYN HIGHTOWER: FOLIES BERGÈRE

ON a certain bleak November night this year you might well have seen a small figure hurrying through the streets towards the Palladium. If you had looked more closely you would have noticed that her legs were only protected against the cold by the flimsiest of tights and that on her feet she wore tiny satin toe-shoes.

You would have been surprised to recognise Florida-born Marilyn Hightower, hurrying on foot because of a defaulting taxi towards her second Command Variety Performance, which she sandwiched between her appearances at the Hippodrome; it was a high-spot in a career which began when Marilyn was five years old.

When she was five she was already training as a contortionist, her young muscles acquiring that suppleness which is so exciting in her work today.

Soon after, she began taking lessons in ballet and character dancing under Ernest Belcher in California, where she worked with the two Tallchief sisters, Maria and Marjorie. Her ambition now was to be a ballerina and she danced for two seasons, as the youngest member of a company, with Nijinska at Hollywood Bowl.

Then, after understudying Vera Zorina in *Louisiana Purchase*, her ambition changed. She decided on a career in musical comedy. With her three brothers she formed the famous American dance team, The Hightowers, appearing frequently with Ethel Merman.

When Marilyn left the act to accept a solo engagement her place was taken by Vera Ellen, now a Hollywood film star.

It would be wrong to say, despite all the evidence of success in her career, that Marilyn Hightower has never looked back, for she has looked back frequently, but only to learn from past experience. Her dancing is a breathtaking blending of acrobatic brilliance and true balletic grace.

England first saw this dynamic red-head in 1946, when Tom Arnold brought her over for his summer show in Blackpool. When Tom Arnold saw her she was dancing at the famous Copacabana Club in New York, where for two years she had appeared as a soloist. Her first English contract coincided with the discharge of one of her brothers from the army and it was with him as a partner that she opened in Blackpool.

After Blackpool, a season at the Palladium, over to Paris, then one of the rare setbacks in Marilyn's career. She injured a leg and was unable to dance for some months. Not long after this the tragic death of her brother cast another shadow over her life. But the determination which has marked her rise to fame brought her through these misfortunes. Her leg recovered, she went into *Starlight Roof*. When this show closed Marilyn went home for a well earned holiday. She returned to England to begin rehearsals for the ill-fated *Roundabout*.

After *Roundabout* closed, rehearsals began for the *Folies Bergère*, in which she is now starring.

Still in her twenties, Marilyn has had a long life in the theatre. She has travelled far in her career since, at the age of five, she wore her first tiny sequined costume as a child contortionist. The costume hangs in her dressing room now, perhaps as a mascot, perhaps as a reminder of all the hard work that has been and still is so much of her life.

And the future? When the *Folies Bergère* closes here, the director of the *Folies* in Paris wants Marilyn to do a season there, possibly followed by one in New York.

Neil Macmillan

Antonia

Rafael (Walter Gore, *bottom left*) alone in his room, sees in a tortured vision his beloved Antonia (Paula Hinton) in the arms of Sebastian (David Paltenghi, *below*). He searches for her through the masked crowds of a revel (*top right*). Finding her at last, he murders her for her unfaithfulness. (*Photographs by Chris Ware for Keystone*)

First given by BALLET RAMBERT at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith, on Monday, October 17; choreography by Walter Gore; music, Sibelius; costumes and décor, Harry Cordwell.

Antonia .. .. .. Paula Hinton
Sebastian .. .. David Paltenghi
Rafael .. .. .. Walter Gore
Revellers .. Barbara Grimes, Pamela Vincent, Sylvia Briar, Beryl Goldwyn, Mavis Traill, Margaret Pollen, Angela Sparshott, Audrey Brooks, Anne Horne, Shirley Roberts, Shirley Rees, Cecil Bates, Charles Lake, Ronald Hyne, Norman Dixon.

Love, in ballet guise, is no longer the spectre of a rose but the reality of a woman who bites. Sex and suicide have become what the dream and fairy tale were but yesterday. Now murder and madness pattern *Antonia*, Walter Gore's latest work. Choreographed in three scenes to selected pieces from Sibelius, with décor and costumes by Harry Cordwell, it was given its first performance on Monday, October 17, during the Ballet Rambert's season at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith.

Paula Hinton created an intensely viscious, brilliant and biting Antonia with Gore as her lover impelled to murder. David Paltenghi danced the only other accented role.

Antonia is the end of a story: the story of Rafael and his passionate love for Antonia. It begins in the darkness of his room where he is tortured by thoughts of her as she used to be. He then sees her as he discovered her, wanton, worthless and entirely faithless. His tortured mind keeps her continually before him, allows no respite. As his beloved she is caressive. In unison they dance but always singly: she is a vision, cannot be touched or held. Tormented, he sees her in the arms of another man, Sebastian. Driven near to madness by his thoughts he rushes from the room, out into the street. We hear the banging of the door.

There is a revel, a vaguely Renaissance Mardi Gras (to the *Festivo* music), which has the wanton abandon of all masqued crowds. Rafael buys a mask from a cripple in order to watch unobserved. Antonia and Sebastian enter covered with a large cloak which Rafael tears off to stun his rival with a blow. He then pursues Antonia but always she just evades him. He is impelled to chase, to capture her. Running, he draws close, twice she falls before he reaches her.

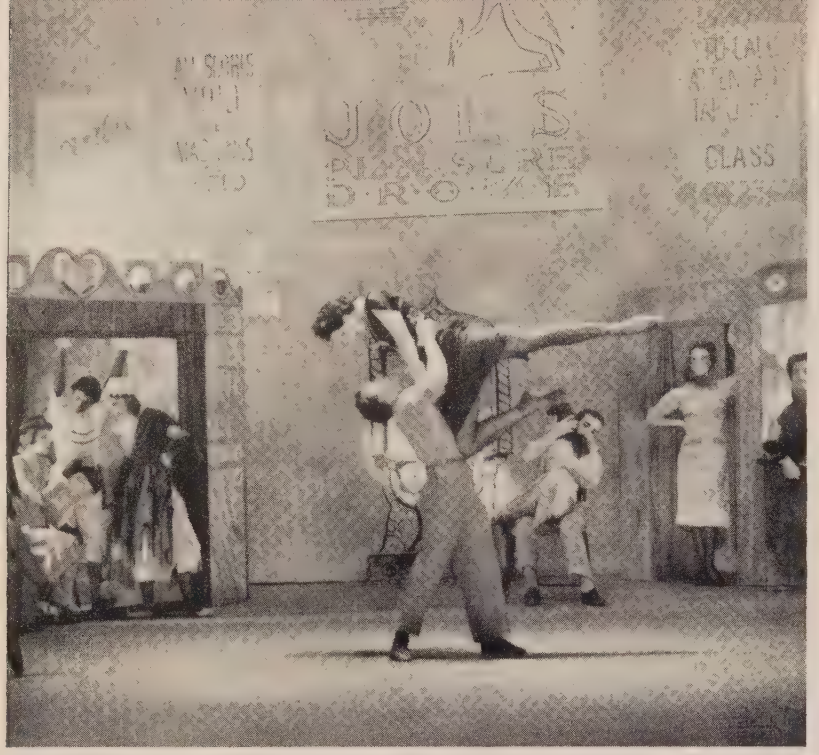
No longer can she escape him. Trapped, she knows that her fate is sealed. Yet again she seeks to seduce him. He takes her, suffocates and strangles her in his arms. The story has ended in madness and tragedy.

The ballet received what often, and dubiously enough, is called "a mixed reception" from both critics and audience, who wrote or spoke of a too strongly accented theme of sex, while there were a few pale murmurs of "shocking" and suggestions of anglicised echoes of recent French works.

Striving to tell all, it told little; too often misusing the dance language of suggestion and evocation for loud statement and somewhat bald fact. The Grander the Passion, the fleshier the story, the more must it be policed, restricted and transposed into the confines of its new form, until only the spirit, the essence itself, is visible. Then, the physical aspect is hidden and left for us to find—if we want to.

Tatlock Miller

Antonia again seeks to seduce Rafael but her fate is sealed. In his fury he jealously suffocates and strangles her and she dies in his arms



Nick (Michel de Lutry) expresses his love for the soft-hearted Flo' (Celia Franca) in a pas de deux (Photo: Duncan Melvin)

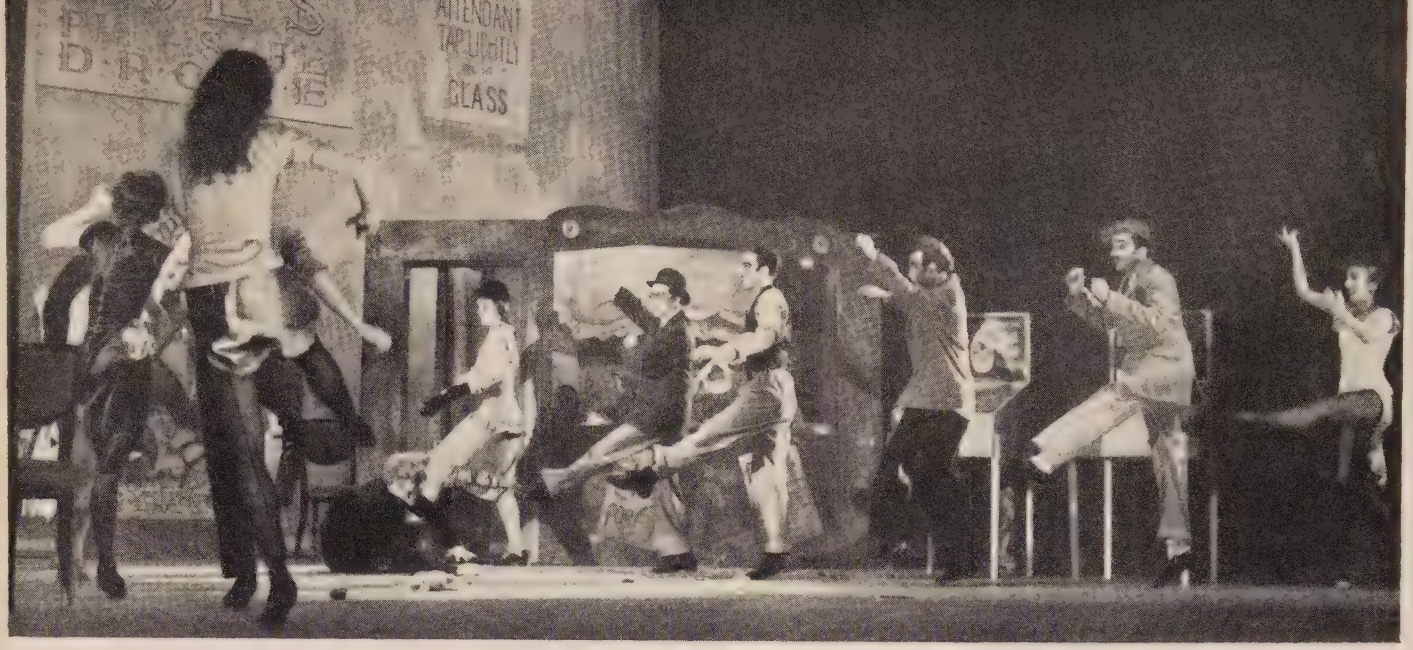
CAST

Nick (a boy from the country)	Michel de Lutry
Flo' (a soft-hearted floosie)	Celia Franca
Joe (The Boss)	Witaly Osins
Gypsy Juniper (a palmist)	Cynthia Allegro
Millicent (no lady at all)	Anne Lascelles
Mildred (her friend) ..	Nancy Holder
Charlie (rifle range attendant)	Geoffrey Webb
Suzanne (a flash showgirl)	Fay Hammond
Jack } *(two lovers)*	Seamus Gordon
Daphne }	Hermione Hudson
Matthew (a change boy)	Henry Haythorne
Harry (man at the Grab Machine)	Terry Hawarth
Mrs. Higginson	Romayne Austin
Mr. Higginson .. .. *(out of town visitors)*	Michael Holmes
Lily (an undecided woman)	Kristel Karnilova
Loafers	Alex Martin Geoffrey Davidson

PLEASUREDROME

Ballet in one act by Peter Williams ; choreography, Rosella Hightower ; music, John Lanchbery ; costumes and setting, Leonard Rosoman. First given at the Coliseum, Harrow, on October 20, 1949

The two persistent floosies, Millicent (Anne Lascelles) and Mildred (Nancy Holder) insist on dancing a rumba with Joe, the Boss (Witaly Osins) (Photo: Partican, Amsterdam)



Harry (Terry Hawarth) spends all his time and money on the grab-machine. When it goes wrong and starts to shower out gifts, they are all wrested from him by Joe and his minions *(Photo: Partican, Amsterdam)*

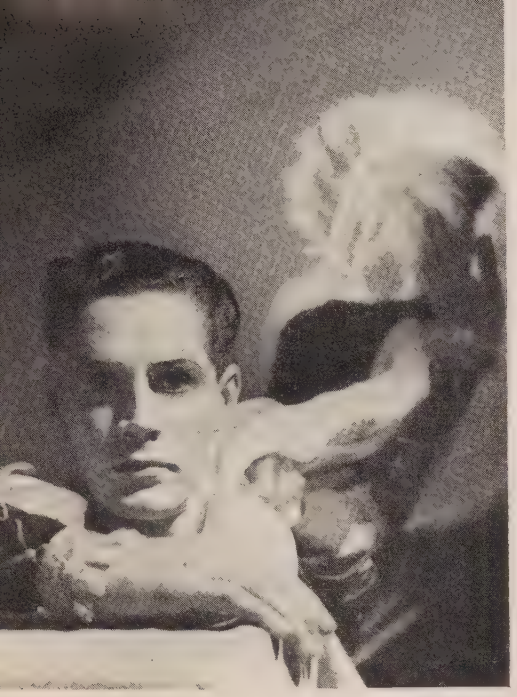
I did not see *Pleasuredrome* when it was first produced at the Coliseum, Harrow. When, in the apt atmosphere of the East End's People's Palace, I did see Rosella Hightower's ballet, she had spent two days revising her work and much that was criticised after the first performance was modified and improved. Personally I wished that Miss Hightower's revisions had lengthened the ballet rather than shortened it. This tawdry tale of Nick, a country boy dissipating his first pay packet in the neon-lighted jungle of the amusement arcade, is painfully true to life.

The good-humoured lady of the streets, Flo' (Celia Franca) seeing her workaday advances taken too seriously, returns momentarily to her protector the proprietor of the Pleasuredrome. Disillusionments follow in quick succession until finally a sadder and wiser Nick, his money stolen by Gypsy Juniper, an East End Oriental, and brutally beaten up by the jealous Joe, drifts back into the night.

The ballet was specially created for the various dancers of the company, who seem to be happy in their roles. The abruptness of the tempo changes in the music, hinders the development of the plot and interrupts the flow of what might have been a perfect picture of a pin-table alley. As it is the various characters, all clearly defined, well danced and acted, seem almost to be thrust apart by these sudden changes. It is, none the less, a much better ballet than many a more pretentious extravagance of larger and more established companies.

Neil Macmillan

After Gypsy Juniper (Cynthia Allegro) has told Nick's rosy future, she picks his pocket and steals all the money he has earned during his first week in London. Flo' tries to intervene *(Photo: Partican, Amsterdam)*



Frank Staff, who is now Maître de Ballet *at the Empire* (*Photo: Duncan Melvin*)

New life for the Empire

BALLET bugles are blowing and setting the wild Al Jolson echoes flying across Leicester Square because ballet is coming back to the Empire. May fanfares flourish the news and trumpets sound it, for of all theatres in London the Empire belongs to Genée rather than to Garson.

It was here Genée made her London debut; Kyasht too; in fact more than sixty ballets were produced here for a quarter of a century before the terpsichorean muse, after a few rollicking high-kicks of revue, abdicated and made way for the film.

Now Frank Staff has formed an Empire Ballet, a troupe of eighteen English dancers, as the nucleus of a compact permanent company, which will present one complete ballet four times daily before the film takes over for the programme's second half.

It is his intention to establish a first-class company; new productions are being planned so that a diverse repertoire can gradually be built up with new works by new choreographers.

Staff has at his disposal a permanent orchestra of thirty-five; superb stage plus technical equipment is being specially installed.

One of his greatest problems will be to gauge this new audience's reaction to ballet. What will it want? His standards are high. He hopes to introduce good ballet to a film audience and win from it new devotees. Ballet, after all, is entertainment and if it is good entertainment it is fairly certain to be good ballet.

Frank Staff is ideally suited to the task of carrying on the tradition which for so long made ballet the chief attraction at the Empire.

Working with the Ballet Rambert, his first work, a miniature, was *The Tartans*, produced in 1938, and those who saw it were immediately conscious of a young choreographer who could design in movement with ease and originality. *Czernyana*, first given at the Duchess Theatre in the following year, showed the keen edge of his wit and his ability to satirise.

Early in 1940 he produced *The Seasons*, his first work of larger dimension. In *Peter and the Wolf* he achieved happy adherence to both Prokofiev and fable, at the same time, in the Hunter's dance, managing to imprint brilliantly his own sense of the comic. His "symphonic" *Enigma Variations*, to Elgar, was first produced at the Art Theatre, Cambridge, in 1940.

Un Songe, to Lekeu music (first produced at the Theatre Royal, Norwich) revealed that sense of tenderness and depth of mood which was to be more strongly evoked in his latest work, *Fanciulla delle Rose*, the Girl of the Roses who comes with a garland of seven blooms for the Madonna; the seven deadly sins despoil her offering and she is left with only a crown of thorns.

This last work, made for the Metropolitan Ballet and danced by Beriosova, I have not seen, but Staff says that for him it is his most satisfying work to date.

"The critics," he says, "did not like it but it moved a stockbroker to tears." He left the Metropolitan Company to stage operas and a large central ballet for the film version of *The Dancing Years*.

For his first ballet, which has its *première* on Boxing Day, he is looking back over those other grander, gaudier and gayer, now so nostalgic, years when the Empire (built on the site of a royal residence—which became a café chantant and later housed a panorama of Balaclava), opened in 1884.

It was a gala night with a midnight revue and an electric ballet of fifty Amazons "as invented by Trouvé, of Paris, and being the first time where three electric lamps were carried and manipulated by one person with the most startling and glorious effect."

This first year saw *Giselle*. Here also were produced military pantomime, Moorish, Turkish, butterfly, "lace" and choral ballets, interspersed with pastoral fantasies. Genée made her great debut on November 22, 1897, in *Monte Cristo*, her first six months' engagement extending into 10 years with return visits to follow!

London was at her feet for her *Spirit of the Liberty of the Press* role, for her *Vanessa Imperialis*, the Butterfly Queen guarded by her own glow-worm patrol. She danced in *Coppelia* in 1906. In 1908 Kyasht, first here of all the Russians, made her debut with Bolm.

And here, too, danced Cecchetti, Mlle. Giuri, Edouard Espinosa, Phyllis Bedells, Mlle. Adele Rossi and Topsy Sinden.

Those nights saw *The Palace of Pearl*, *Our Crown* (the coryphees were rubies, emeralds, diamonds), *Klondyke* (with ice fairies and the Aurora Borealis) and *The Reaper's Dream* (with its Spirit of the Wheatsheaf).

What memories, what enchantments it conjures up. It is from all this that Frank Staff is evoking the mood of his new ballets. He must let his own inventiveness, wit and tenderness be like those three electric lamps carried and manipulated by one person with such startling and glorious effect on that other first opening night.

Tatlock Miller

BOOKS

Sadler's Wells Ballet Books, edited by Arnold Haskell (*Published by The Bodley Head, Illustrated, 2s. 6d.*).

1. *The Sleeping Beauty*, with articles by Sacheverell Sitwell, Joy Newton, Tamara Karsavina, and Dyneley Hussey.
2. *Job* and *Rake's Progress*, with articles by Joan Lawson, James Laver, Geoffrey Keanes, and Frank Howes.
3. *Hamlet* and *Miracle in the Gorbals*, with articles by Michael Benthall, Clemence Dane, M. H. Middelton, Arnold Haskell, and Eric Blom.
4. *Carnaval*, *Spectre de la Rose* and *Les Sylphides*, with articles by Lincoln Kirstein, Arnold Haskell and Stewart Deas.

Lincoln Kirstein's crisp article on Fokine characterises the style of this new series of lucidly written and compactly contrived booklets aimed at helping the public to know the repertoire of the Sadler's Wells Ballet.

All phases in the creation of ballet are covered; with all extraneous material and references to footnotes reduced to a minimum.

Each volume is devoted to the works of a specific Wells choreographer.—**D.R.**

England Dances, by Douglas Kennedy (Bell and Sons, 7s. 6d.).

I am no authority on the Folk Dance, but I found much to fascinate me in Douglas Kennedy's book. Pleasantly written and well documented, it traces the history of the Folk Dance from its early beginnings to the present day.

Particularly interesting are the descriptions of local variations of the same dance and the history of the medieval Folk Play.

This book will be welcomed by lovers of folk lore as well as the Dance.—**N.M.**

Moira Shearer, by Pigeon Crowle (Faber and Faber, 21s.).

As soon as a dancer attains a certain measure of success in her career it is inevitable that someone, somewhere, will produce a book on her life and work.

Moira Shearer has attained no uncertain measure of success but her career has, on account of her youth, been short. She has still many years in which to mature as an artist and there seems little point at this stage to attempt to sum up her work.

Pigeon Crowle's loosely-knit string of anecdotes and reminiscences, pointlessly interspersed with all too familiar legends of the classical ballet, will no doubt give much pleasure to Miss Shearer's many film and ballet fans.

Apart from its hideous jacket, the book is extremely well produced, as always, by Faber and Faber. The photographs by Duncan Melvin and others are pleasant.—**N. M.**

Handbooks of European National Dances (Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Switzerland and The Netherlands), Max Parrish and Co., Ltd., 3*s.* 6*d.* each.

This most recent collection of Handbooks of European National Dances conveys much of the origin and disposition of our European neighbours. They are attractively adorned by colour plates illustrating national folk costumes as related to the dances explained in the text. An introduction, defining the names and origins of the various dances, is followed by notes on how to execute them; included are appropriate samples of music for piano transcription. A useful collection of books for those interested in folk-dancing.—**D.R.**

WHAT THEY SAID

ARYL BRAHMS in the Evening Standard

For almost the first time I can remember I felt that I, alone in the theatre, disliked a work. Certainly this ballet by Roland Petit, to the music of Bizet, with décors that were rich in tone and effective in expression by Clavé, danced with spirit and dexterity by Renée Jeanmaire, met with an acclaim that would hardly disappoint the signatories to a peace treaty.

Yet for all its explosive vitality, the ballet lacked atmosphere and to me, its tenser moments seemed vaguely comic.

Moreover, it was mean of Don José to purloin the Habanera for his pas seul, I was somewhat surprised to find him left alive at the end. Surely a ballerina of Carmen's spirit would have knifed the man for less?

ICHARD BUCKLE in the Observer

Purists must complain of the use made of Bizet's music; and Petit has, without scruple, mixed classical steps, Spanish stamping, realistic gestures (lighting cigarettes, pulling hair) and the semi-realistic mime of silent cinema (eyes narrowing for jealousy, breast heaving for fear): but he has breathed hot life into the carcase of the old melodrama. Dramatic moments abound, and there is a touch of comedy in the Toreador and his lady admirers.

. V. COTON in Dance News

Carmen—a good idea for a ballet, but built almost entirely on near-realistic movements and acrobatic tricks, rather than on dancing—has five scenes, each of which demands an interval for changing as long as the scene itself. In front of so much paint, drapes, scaffolding, staircases, booths, tables, screens, beds, fences, ladders, etc., the dancers enact a routine of movement whose emptiness would be all too apparent on a decently empty stage, such as ballet demands.

ILIAN BROWSE in the Sunday Times

This ballet conforms to the same choreographic pattern as Demoiselles de la Nuit *and has approximately the same faults and merits —lack of shape and concentration in the ensembles, over-emphasis on décor, and a sensitively beautiful scene between the two leading dancers, Roland Petit and the bewitching Renée Jeanmaire. It is so difficult to eliminate associations of the opera that it seems a pity Petit did not simply use the theme to different music and with other title.*

The Dancing Times

Whether it is legitimate to treat such a well-known theme so arbitrarily is a debatable point. To those who know the opera it is extremely disconcerting to hear the music torn from its context, particularly as Petit fails to interpret its melodic and rhythmic qualities. Moreover, when it is finally discarded and Don José fights and kills Carmen to drum beats, one wonders why music was not specially commissioned. However, if one can disregard these discrepancies, the ballet is powerful, telling the personal story of Carmen's seduction of Don José and her death at his hands. Like Merimée's novel and Bizet's opera it is a typically melodramtic view of Spain.

Carmen

New Statesman

Carmen is the most striking and ambitious work we have seen from Roland Petit; in it he exhibits all his merits and some defects. He has stirred in a number of ingredients taken from revue, circus, cinema and flamence to make a well-spiced olla podrida. Bits are excellent, particularly the pas de deux *from the bedroom scene, and he is fortunate in his tomboy of a Carmen—Renée Jeanmaire; she is as beautiful as a jay and perfectly suited to the erotic idiom of the piece. Petit himself has a star personality, and there are flashes of brilliance in his choreography: in the part of Don José he makes a dramatic, if shallow, effect. His dancing has become mannered, frequently vulgar; movements are too often given a tricky punch. Clavé's modish Spanish sets are admirable—brightly coloured and effective though perhaps some of the dresses are over reminiscent of Picasso's* Tricorne*; but the general impression is always suitably vivid.*

Next Month

Among the articles and contributors in the February number of DANCE AND DANCERS will be :

CARYL BRAHMS

THE NIJINSKY GALA IN PICTURES

4 NEW CHAMPS-ELYSÉES BALLETS IN PICTURES

Dancers you should know: TOMMY LINDEN

The Story of the INTERNATIONAL BALLET

News — Gossip — Ballet Dates — Clubs — Curtain Up ! — Book and Record Reviews — 24 pages of pictures and features with **FULL COLOUR COVER PICTURE OF MASSINE AND BABILÉE**

DANCE AND DANCERS February number will be published on January 25, price 1*s.*, and is obtainable of all newsagents and booksellers on order or by post from our offices (see page two for subscription rates).

Rosella Hightower — *continued from page 8*

but by the time the company opened at Drury Lane she was a full member of a corps de ballet. War was declared soon after their return to France and most of the company left for America. Back in New York she became a soloist, dancing in the *Lac des Cygnes pas de trois*, and Papillon in *Carnaval*.

After leaving Massine's company she joined the newly formed Ballet Theatre; it was then that she started to dance principal roles and Fokine created for her the Goddess of War in *Helen of Troy*.

The company moved to Washington and Rosella substituted for Markova in *Lac des Cygnes*, eventually taking over all the principal roles when the great English ballerina left. This was the beginning of her partnership with André Eglevsky.

Just before Ballet Theatre left for England in 1946 she rejoined Massine, touring for a year with his Ballet Highlights, a concert group that included Massine, Youskevitch, Guelis and Istomina.

Rosella Hightower at the age of 16 *in* Moonlight Sonata

Her first attempt at choreography was for the Markova-Dolin group when, to Rossini music, she created *Henry the Eighth* with Dolin in the title role and Markova as Ann Boleyn. Unfortunately she had left New York to join the Marquis de Cuevas company, before the *première* of her first work; it was considerably altered and little of her invention remained.

With the de Cuevas company, during their first Paris season at the Alhambra Theatre, she had her first astounding success. The French, usually so blasé, were left speechless by her brilliant technique, her lightness and her ability to surmount almost every obstacle.

I remember sitting just in front of Ninette de Valois on the first night of the de Cuevas' Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo at Covent Garden. De Valois is not usually the most demonstrative of people, but as Rosella did her *double tour a la seconde* and *balloné sur les pointes en équilibres* in the *Black Swan pas de deux*, I heard astonished squawks and gasps behind me. "She is the first virtuoso dancer I have seen in twenty years," said de Valois.

Today, Rosella continues to improve her roles and develop her characterisation. A few weeks ago she took over at a moment's notice, the most difficult role of the Miller's Wife in *Le Tricorne*, from Toumanova who was suffering from jaundice. Judging by all reports she was magnificent; if she could master this role there seems little that she could not triumph over.

As a choreographer she has an American approach, coming to her rehearsals with a perfectly clear idea as to what she wants, so that it is possible to start right away without the usual fiddling around. She has sized up the dancers and worked out all the steps before reaching the rehearsal room.

As a person she is unassuming with no sign of ballerina temperament. She is human and kind, qualities which make her loved by all who know her.

She is just as at home in the low down-town joint as at the Ritz or Savoy, though she probably prefers the former.

This then is the story of the Oklahoma girl who came to dazzle every capital of Europe.

P.W.

Première : CHAMPS-ELYSÉES

LES BALLET DES CHAMPS-ELYSÉES opened their Paris season with a gala presentation of four new ballets (in the end there were only three). There are two ways of going to a "chic" French opening; one is right and one is wrong. The obvious way is to start changing slowly about two hours before, perhaps sipping champagne at the same time, step elegantly into a large car and step out again at the theatre with equal elegance, smiling graciously at the expectant crowd who hope to see someone else.

My plane was late. There were no taxis at Les Invalides. The kindly porter, who offered to carry my suitcase to the theatre, seemed surprised that I was still alive. He had not much use for aeroplanes. "Look what happened to our Cerdan," he said, "now he leaves a widow and three children and forty carriages filled with flowers followed his coffin. The same thing could easily happen to you." He looked pityingly at me and continued to enlarge on the horrors of flying until we fetched up outside the theatre.

All Paris was milling around in the foyer, the Gardes Republicaine glittered on the staircase, it was impossible to see anything owing to the brilliant floodlights that always seem to make such occasions a nightmare.

There was I, still stained from travel, incorrectly dressed, with a porter about to stop more people from supporting B.E.A. or Air France. But owing to the good offices of the faithful Monsieur Jean Robin I was able to appear in a more respectable state in time for the performance.

Four New Ballets

No company other than the Champs-Elysées would attempt to put on four new ballets in one evening; it is usually difficult enough to put on one. As it was, Massine's *Le Peintre et Son Modèle* was not finished in time.

It was the combined efforts of two Englishmen, Beaton and Walton; one American, Taras; and a Russian, Kochno; who made the opening ballet into a holiday task. *Devoir de Vancances* is a very slight work which could make a perfect opening ballet or *Defilé*.

Beaton has designed a pretty classroom in white and green as a background for the somewhat lackadaisical results of holiday inspiration. Each member of the company is supposed to have thought up some dance based on a person of literature or the theatre.

The choreography by Taras has all the listlessness of the first day of term, which is probably what was intended. Walton's music was unobtrusive and unfinished; the *pas de deux* music had to be repeated for the *finale*.

When the whole ballet has been revised and pulled together it will be a useful alternative opening ballet to *Treizes Danses*.

It is hard to see how the second new work of the evening, Babilée's version of *Till Eulenspiegel*, could possibly fail. The music of Strauss is so well known and eminently suitable for ballet; American designer, Tom Keogh, has all the fantasy so admirable for this medieval tragi-comedy.

For Babilée, the ballet must have been almost autobiographical. Of course, we know of many previous sure-fire rockets that have turned into damp squibs at a *première* but this completely fulfilled expectations. It is pure comedy all the way through as Babilée has ignored Till's final execution.

Perhaps this is just as well for he seems eternally fated to a grisly death in his almost every role. He seems to have modelled his Till on the Joker in Charrat's *Jeu de Cartes*, though this latter character has a sinister measured evil whereas the former has all the naughtiness resulting from natural high spirits.

The role is, as was to be expected, perfect for the remarkable qualities of this chameleon-like dancer. In this, his second ballet, Babilée has evaded the trap that so frequently ensnares young choreographers—the trap of pretentiousness and over complication.

Till Eulenspiegel, like his first work *L'Amour et Son Amour*, is simple; it has a story without frills and without a message; and is completely theatrical. Although he is the central figure, he has devised interesting roles for the minor characters and *corps de ballet* who are woven intricately into the weft of this twentieth century version of a fourteenth century tapestry. Keogh's designs have the simplicity of the

Choreographer Taras discussing his new ballet with Rodolphe and Darmance
(Photo: B. M. Bernand)

immortal Bérard wedded to the clinically clean colours of the New World.

Le Reparateur de Radios (The Mender of Wireless-sets) was intended, presumably, to be a *Jeune Homme et La Mort* on a slightly higher scale, socially not aesthetically. It is little more than a long, very long, *pas de deux* for the two acrobats of the company, Teddy Rodolphe and Danielle Darmance.

It is, as choreographer John Taras rightly described it: "Like a long boring Sunday that goes on and on and on . . .". Sunday can be interminable but ballets should not. The idea was a good one—Le Petit Gars (the little guy) wakes up, does his morning exercises, gets his breakfast, makes love to his girl, and goes off to the country for the day with her.

During their absence neighbours call with their children and perambulators. The lovers return from the country in the evening, covered with lilacs, they turn on the radio which gives out music from a night club, conveyed by a cluster of writhing dancers and waiters (do you remember *Dance, Dance, Dance little lady* in the Noel Coward revue?); the audience gets restless and starts to boo and whistle; night falls and so does the curtain. Loud boos from the audience but deserved cheers for Rodolphe and Darmance. A great scandal in next morning's papers.

The demonstration was mainly political as the book was by Elsa Triolet, author of *Le Cheval Blanc*, and Russian wife of communist writer Aragon, but nevertheless the ballet was far too long. The choreography has many wonderful moments that could never be achieved by anyone other than an acrobat.

It was brave of Taras to attempt such a work and it is probable that when it is cut down by about ten minutes, his valour will be rewarded. The designs of photographer, Brassai, were suitably undistinguished; the music of Jean Rivier was undistinguished—not so suitably.

Final reflection—this company is getting far too many ballets built around the idiosyncrasies of certain dancers; should any of them leave, the repertoire would be cut in half with the dullest half left.

P.W.

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ON Tuesday, November 15, Massine's *Le Peintre et son Modèle* had its first performance. Our Paris correspondent, ALAIN VIGO, writes:

It is very much in spite of its theme that I found some interest in the new ballet. Massine's choreography is forced, harsh, without fluency, but not without imagination and beauty. Though frequently in very bad taste, specially when he makes use of properties (an easel, a palate, a frame) and when he attempts to express the thin story in dance terms; it does have great beauty when he liberates himself from the subject-matter and when one can regard the ballet as an abstract exercise. The music by George Auric (written after the composition of the ballet) is very successful in that it transcends the drama and brings to it a certain element of mystery and originality. It is, moreover, very good ballet music. The dècor of Balthus can only be said to be good and from this company we are now used to something better than good.

Youly Algaroff takes great pains with the role of a tormented painter as seen by Dostoïevsky. His effort, if not the result, deserves our sympathy and our admiration. The only truly striking thing in this uneven work is the interpretation of the role of the Modèle by Skorik. This dancer, who is the antithesis of a romantic and classical ballerina by her lack of poetry, and femininity, has at last found a role which suits her perfectly. She dances in pink fleshings which show off her statuesque figure. All her defects which we notice in her romantic and classical roles become, under Massine's direction, great qualities. For example, the acrobatic technique which spoils all her basic positions becomes useful and extraordinary in this modern work. For the first time also, she has shown us that she can speak to us with her arms and free herself from that stiffness peculiar to the Gsovsky school.

To sum up—an interesting ballet on an uninteresting theme; a choreography that has its moments; a décor; a very good score; and an unexpected and admirable Skorik.

SPEAK UP!

Under this heading, next month, will be given a selection of the most interesting letters received on any aspect of the dance. Only extracts will be printed from long letters.

Address your letters to—SPEAK UP!, DANCE AND DANCERS, Mersey House, 132-134 Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

Jean Babilée in his *L'Amour et son Amour*

Photo : Harcourt

MUSIC

A slipper for Cinderella

by EVAN SENIOR

NOT so long ago, the well-known Director of an equally well-known ballet company was listening to a concert, together with some of the company's dancers.

In the middle of an orchestral work known almost by heart to hundreds of thousands of Albert Hall Prom enthusiasts, the Director turned to one of the dancers.

"That sounds most interesting. You know, it might make a ballet."

"It has, already," replied the dancer.

Today in Britain it is not only possible to find the same attitude to music in more or less every ballet company, but it is almost impossible not to find it. Those who direct the energies of the ballet companies, those who plan new ballets and say what shall and shall not be done, are seldom musicians. They are invariably dancers, graduated to the positions they now hold, or choreographers.

This means one thing: that they forget the composite nature of the art with which they are dealing. In the main, they concentrate on only one aspect of it—dancing.

But ballet is not dancing. It is not décor. Nor is it a combination of these two. Dancing, décor and music are of equal importance—theoretically. But for a long time now, music has been the Cinderella of ballet.

A contemporary publication, a few months ago, put its finger on the problem when it suggested ironically that soon one might hear someone say, in a discussion on a new ballet, "Whose scenery are you going to use?" in just the same way that nowadays one hears "Whose music are you going to use?"

That attitude toward the musical content of ballet, shared by almost all choreographers and ballet directors—and perhaps most of all by dancers themselves—explains to some extent the general contempt in which modern ballet is held by the more responsible musicians and musicologists.

There are exceptions, of course. Many celebrated musicians have written music for ballet and many do today. Would that there were more of them! And more ballet companies who would take the trouble to employ musicians in the same way that they employ décor artists!

The part played by music in ballet should be of no less importance than that played by dancing and décor. It has a definite function. It shares with dancing and stage setting the job of conveying the emotion planned by the creator of the work, the welder of sound, movement and colour into a single work of art.

Because all these three aspects of a ballet are of equal importance, the ideal arrangement would be a ballet in which all three were conceived simultaneously by the same mind. That is for all practical purposes out of the question, however, for at least some technical knowledge of each art would be necessary. How many dancers know anything of composition, how many musicians know anything of either dancing or choreography and how many décor artists know anything of either?

The usual procedure is, of course, for a choreographer to find himself "inspired" by some piece of music. He listens to it, not with his mind, but far more often purely with his emotions. On that he proceeds to base choreography. In other words, as he will tell you, he "interprets" the music in terms of dancing.

He interprets it—as he feels it. What the composer meant it to be doesn't come into it. If it did, it is obvious that two choreographers, each creating a ballet based on the same composition and understanding that composition in musical terms, would manage to produce somewhat similar works.

In London at the moment there is a new ballet to by no means new music, by a famous composer. The London choreographer has "felt" in this music one idea. A few years ago in Australia I saw another ballet based on the same work with not the slightest resemblance in either theme or choreography.

Nowadays, choreographers have invaded another sphere of music. Not content with music that "tells a story", they have taken up what musicians call "absolute music"—that is, music which exists for its own sake alone, not to tell a story, describe a scene or person or do anything except create its own effect, complete, on the emotions of the listener.

But to the artistic mind of the choreographer, that is not enough. That the composer has definitely disclaimed any "story" does not matter. The choreographer either "sees" one there or tries to follow the musical pattern in the pattern of the dancing that he weds to the music. In this he usually fails completely because of lack of musical knowledge. From what I have seen on ballet stages I should say that hardly a choreographer working today would know what Sonata Form was if he heard it.

Except in a few isolated exceptions which can be taken to prove the rule, ballet today largely does not use music—it abuses it. We have some fine ballets and some not so fine, in which music has been used properly. We have some for which music has been specially composed and so becomes a part of the threefold art which is ballet. But not very many.

Bits of Bach, snatches of Sibelius and what can only be described as tons of Tschaikowsky are lifted wholesale from their musical contexts and used as props for choreography, the two being, more often than not, merely unhappy bedfellows whose honeymoon is usually over almost as soon as it has begun.

How many of the ballets grafted so uneasily

continued on page 23

Juke-box score

by John Lanchbery

THE dominating factor in writing the music of *Pleasuredrome* was—speed. In spite of the fact that the author (Peter Williams) sent me the script at the end of May, I was unable to do little more than rough out the score until Rosella Hightower (the choreographer) arrived in London at the end of June. The script interested me from the first, though I viewed the prospect of writing a jazz-score with a certain amount of misgiving. Fortunately, the nature of the story made it unnecessary for the jazz element to be omnipotent.

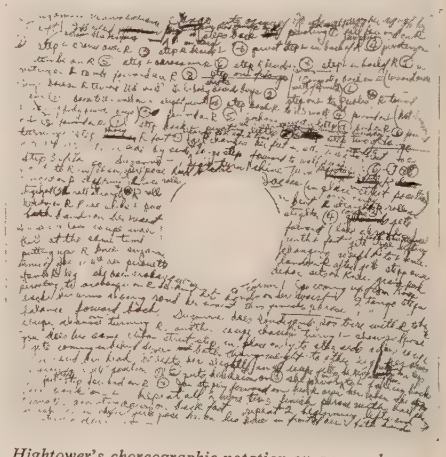
I sketched out the introductory boogie-woogie scene, the entrance of the floozie, Flo', and the dance of the Palmist, Gypsy Juniper, all of which were enthusiastically received by my collaborators (Hightower, Williams, and designer Leonard Rosoman). Cecilia Blatch, director-general of Metropolitan Ballet, approved and asked me to complete the score.

Things were not made easier by the fact that I was also in the middle of another score for Michael Holmes' *Trio Détruit*, the complete antithesis of *Pleasuredrome*. It was not easy to switch from the sombre atmosphere of Browning's story to the brighter lights of Charing Cross Road.

The ballet had to be completed in the three weeks that Metropolitan were at the Lyric, Hammersmith, as this was the only time that the Company and Rosella Hightower would be playing in the same town and within easy reach of each other. It was necessary, therefore, to evolve a rather complicated scheme—I spent the morning composing the score, which would be recorded at the Lyric after the evening performance. The records were then taken straight to Rosella Hightower, then at Covent Garden with the de Cuevas Company; she took them home after her performance, worked all night on the choreography, making notes on the record cases.

Next morning, she rehearsed the Company while I was composing the next number. By working in this way, the ballet was finished in comparatively few days, though it was only made possible by the fact that we all had minds that thought alike.

There was only one number, the *Lovers' Waltz*, that failed to please her and I was not happy about it myself. I can remember creeping back to the theatre, very tired and disconsolate, sitting down at the piano and wondering what on earth to put on those everlasting five bars. Just when I felt I should never compose another



Hightower's choreographic notation on a record case

note, Svetlana Beriosova came on the stage and, holding on to a stray piece of scenery, began the customary *pliés*. The sight of this graceful and simple movement put into my mind and fingers a beautiful flowing melody which became the new *Lovers' Waltz*.

As the author dictated that the score should be a jazz one I wrote the rest more in terms of real life than of the theatre, avoiding the parodied jazz of Stravinsky and the more symphonic jazz of a Gershwin or Kostelanetz.

Dance and Dancers . . . . AT HOME

WE shall be glad to have the SADLER'S WELLS BALLET back at Covent Garden on Boxing Day. The Autumn has seemed particularly drab without them. They are now opening with *Cinderella* instead of the promised *Sleeping Beauty*. Owing to the success of the latter in New York, it was taken on tour and there was a chance that it might not get back here in time. *Cinderella* will be given for two weeks followed by a fortnight of the *Sleeping Beauty*. After that, we hope to see some of the works that have lain unused for three months such as *Mam'selle Angot* and *Scènes de Ballet*. There is no news at the moment as to when we shall see the promised new creations though it is likely that we shall have a new ballet a month for the next five months. The first will probably be the new work by Helpmann, with Ashton's full-length version of Delibes' *Sylvia* third on the roster. Balanchine may do *Concerto Barocco* (with the Berman setting) as well as another work. Roland Petit is scheduled to do a ballet to Chabrier music.

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The second act of *Casse Noisette* is to be revived by the SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET on December 20 with the old, and very suitable, décor that Doubouzhinsky designed for the Vic Wells company in the early thirties. This ballet was given on the night of April 8, 1949, when the "junior company" opened, with Margaret Dale, guest artist from Covent Garden, dancing the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy. Now, Fifield takes this role and she will be partnered by the seventeen-year-old dancer from Halifax—David Blair.

Sheila O'Reilly and Pirmin Trecu (those dancers with almost Teresa and Luisillo popularity) will, of course, do the Spanish dance, with Joan Cadzow in Danse Arabe and Stanley Holden as the Bouffon.

A new *pas de deux*, *Beauty and the Beast*, by John Cranko has its first performance on the same evening. The music is from Ravel's *Mother Goose* suite and it will be danced by Patricia Miller and David Poole. Margaret Kay (Mrs. Reece Pemberton) has designed the costumes and setting. Maryon Lane and Leo Kersley are to dance *Bluebird* on December 27, this is the first time that the company has given this *pas de deux*.

*

BALLET RAMBERT appeared with the great collection of stars in the Empress Hall for the Nijinsky Galas. They danced *Sylphides; Giselle*, Act 2; Paula Hinton, Barbara Grimes and Cecil Bates were in Massine's *Capriccio Espagnol*. On November 25 the company appeared in the fifth of the *Ballet for Beginners* television series, giving *Jardin aux Lilas*, *Giselle* and *Carnival*.

*

INTERNATIONAL BALLET gave a new work at the New Theatre, Oxford, on December 1, this was *Visions* by the Swedish choreographer Julian Algo. Mona Inglesby, Claudie Algeranova, Algeranoff and Helen Armfeldt took the leading roles in the "abstract" ballet to Moussorgsky music. After two weeks in the larger London cinemas, the company go to Zurich where they will give nine performances of the full-length *Coppelia*, *Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauty* in the huge Hallenstadiom. This is the first time that any of these full-length works have had "arena" presentation.

*

METROPOLITAN BALLET had a rather stormy time during their recent tour in Holland. The houses were not very good except in three places. The reason was that Holland has just come off clothes rationing and everybody spent their every penny (or gilder) on new clothes. As well as this, several of the dancers were ill. They flew back to London to give a two-week season at the People's Palace from November 21 to December 3. Rosella Hightower came specially from Paris to see her *Pleasuredrome* in performance for the first time. She made a number of alterations to pull the whole work together. On December 9 and 14, the company gave *The Dance of Salome* on television with choreography by Celia Franca, music by James Hartley and designs by Stephen Bundy. This Christian Simpson production is the first ballet to be specially created for television. On December 17, the company will give a television *Coppelia* in a special Christmas programme.

*

The latest addition to the ST. JAMES'S BALLET repertoire was Alan Carter's *The Story of Polly*, first given in York on October 20. This is following director Alan Carter's policy to produce a new ballet every six months and to encourage any member of the company, with talent, in the creative side of production. This work was the idea of a young Australian, Tom Brown, who also designed the scenery.

Brown worked with various companies in Australia before he came to this country where he joined Metropolitan Ballet as a dancer. He was always more interested in the production side of ballet so he went to the St. James's Ballet as assistant stage manager, later to become assistant director of the company. The costumes were designed by Anne de Mohan, a soloist in the company; the music composed by the pianist—Ian Macintyre.

The next new work, planned for the Spring tour, has choreography by Dorothy Stevenson, another Australian, who it will be remembered, created *Sea Legend* for International Ballet.

*

RAM GOPAL plans to give a London season next Spring. He has been dancing in Turkey at the invitation of the Turkish Government, and from there flew to India, where he picked a company of thirty dancers and musicians. They will soon be arriving in this country together with a lot of interesting new costumes. His book, *An Introduction to Indian Dancing*, is due to be published early in the New Year.

Rosoman, Lanchbery, Blatch, Hightower and Williams discuss Rosoman's designs for Pleasuredrome (*Photo: Duncan Melvin*)

FRANCE

Nina Vyroubova has really settled down at the PARIS OPERA and has danced *Giselle* (full report in our next issue). She has a year's contract and it is to be hoped that this will become her permanent home for she has been roving from company to company far too long. Lifar is said to be revising the Opera version of *La Sylphide* for her, this differs slightly from Gzovsky's version for Les Ballets des Champs-Elysées.

Tamara Toumanova will return to the Paris Opera in February. She has appeared there before, in the summer of 1947, when Balanchine was also engaged as a Guest choreographer.

*

The OPERA COMIQUE gave two new works at the beginning of November, *Bolero* and *Fantaisie-Impromptu* with choreography by Jean-Jacques Etchevery. The two ballets were generally criticised as being second-rate. It was pointed out that Etchevery is more suited to light and humorous works and should keep off irrelevant use of Chopin music, such as he uses for the second work. Solange Schwartz, Michele Rayner and Genevieve Kergrist did the best they could with this poor material.

The list of new works on the schedule is formidable: Jacques Ibert's famous *Escales* (Ports of Call) — yet another version of Poulenc's *Aubade*, previously choreographed by Balanchine and Lifar—*Concerto* to Tchaikowsky music—Auric's *Les Matelots—Hog-Frog* by Loucheur and a large number of others. The Opera Comique is making a bid to become the most important Lyric Theatre in France.

*

LES BALLET DES CHAMPS-ELYSÉES finished their winter season at their own theatre on December 4. Two days later they started a tour of Italy playing at Bologna, Ravenna, Florence, Modena, and Palma. At the end of the month they cross the Mediterranean to Egypt and will be in Cairo and Alexandria for three weeks. Returning home via Italy, they may go straight on to the United States for a long tour. It is unlikely that London will see them before the Autumn.

Leslie Caron left the company after the Paris season, to go on the films following the example of Nellie Guillerme who is now becoming a star. The role created for Caron in a *la Recontre* will be now taken by Danielle Darmance.

*

The Marquis de Cuevas' GRANDE BALLET DE MONTE CARLO had a full but not financially successful season at the Palais de Chaillot. After that they moved to the Sarah Bernhardt Theatre on November 7 without any publicity, with the result that few people in Paris realised that they were there.

Massine revived and danced in *Le Tricorne* on the opening night with Toumanava as the Miller's wife, David Lichine as the Corregidor, and René Bon as the Dandy.

Soon after the opening Toumanava developed jaundice and a successor had to be found to dance the Miller's wife. There was a possibility that Tchernicheva would join the company to dance the role that made her famous with the Diaghilev company; in the end Rosella Hightower, after many protestations, was persuaded. Judging by all reports she was magnificent (is there anything that this dancer cannot do?).

John Gilpin, who left Ballet Rambert to join Roland Petit, is now with the de Cuevas company (Photo: Alec Murray)

Pierre Auburtin, one of the "mosquitos" of the company, left to join the Paris Opera on November 1. He was replaced by Karile Wayilkovsky, former member of the De Basil company.

During their stay in Paris, members of the company have given a number of television programmes, one with Hightower, Pagava and Eglevsky in excerpts from *Lac des Cygnes*, *Casse Noisette*, and fragments of a ballet class. Another with Helga Monson and John Gilpin in the interpolated *pas de deux* from the first act of *Giselle*, which Gilpin used to dance with Ballet Rambert.

Claud Giraud, impressario of the Grande Ballet de Monte Carlo, returned from a visit to Milan and it is rumoured that the company may open there and later tour Italy in December, possibly followed by a tour of Germany.

Eglevsky left for America, with his family, early in December and may rejoin the company when it gives its annual Monte Carlo season in March. For this season, Massine will mount a new work to the *Burgomask* music of Debussy, for Pagava.

American dancer, Constance Garfield, who recently left the company, married English dancer, Alan Baker (now in *Oklahoma*) on December 3 at the Servite Church in London. Maria de Baroncelli, also in the company, flew over to be maid of honour.

*

After her long tour of Europe, DUNHAM is back in Paris with her dancers, singers, musicians, and a lot of new numbers. The company has altered slightly since last year's Prince of Wales season, Richardina Jackson married and now lives in London; Tommy Gomez returned to his wife and family in America.

The two best numbers, *Shango* and *L'Ag'ya* are retained while *Rites de Passage* (see Buckle's book on Dunham), *Afrique*, *Suite Brazilienne* and *Veracruzana* have been added. The latter contains a number of songs and dances from Mexico.

There is still a possibility that Dunham will return to London in the Spring on her way to South America. Before that, there will be a six weeks' tour of Italy and Sicily starting about January 8, with a return visit to Paris at the end of February.

David Lichine is working on the choreography for Ludwig Schmidseder's *La Reine de Valse*, which opens at the Champs-Elysées Theatre on December 22. This is being produced by Paul Feigay, famous for *On the Town* and *Billion Dollar Baby* in New York.

Schmidseder's operetta was first given in Vienna, but he says that he has altered it for Paris so as to make it the kind of operetta that the French think is typically Viennese. It will later come to London, probably altered in the same way. Lichine is said to have arranged a large number of ballets for this work.

U. S. A.

HIGHLIGHTS of the NEW YORK CITY BALLET which opened at City Centre on November 23 were the first performances of two Balanchine works. New choreography to Stravinsky's Fire Bird, with costumes and décor by Marc Chagall, featured Maria Tallchief in the title role with Nicolas Magallanes as Ivan Tsarevich. The other new Balanchine work was choreographed to a Chabrier score. Also, in the "new works" department was a ballet by William Dollar, former choreographer and *Maître de Ballet* for the de Cuevas company. This ballet *Undine* has a Vivaldi score.

In the "revival department" is *Jinx*, a ballet in two scenes by Lew Christensen to Benjamin Britten music; Jerome Robbins' *Guests* and Todd Bolender's *Mother Goose*. The Balanchine revivals consisted of Bizet's *Symphony in C*, Stravinsky's *Orpheus*, *Concerto Barocco* to the Bach Double Violin Concerto, *Serenade*, *Divertimento*, *Symphonie Concertante* and the *Four Temperaments*.

Heading the list of soloists in this company of sixty dancers were Maria Tallchief, Janet Reed, Tanaquil LeClercq, Melissa Hayden, Lois Ellyn, Beatrice Tompkins, Jerome Robbins, Nicolas Magallanes, Frank Moncion, Herbert Bliss, Todd Bolender and Frank Hobi.

*

Lucia Chase, benefactress of BALLET THEATRE, is planning a tenth anniversary Spring season for her company at City Center. This is where Ballet Theatre made its successful debut ten years ago. Heading the company's roster will be Nora Kaye, Igor Youskevitch, Nana Gollner, Hugh Laing, and John Kriza. Erik Bruhn, of the Royal Theatre, Copenhagen (who also appeared with London Metropolitan Ballet) has now joined the company.

*

New York City will be the scene of international ballet when the CANADIAN BALLET appears simultaneously with ballet groups from England and France. Sponsored by the Choreographers' Workshop, the Canadian Ballet will present on December 17, works by the Montreal Ballet under the direction of Ruth Sorel and works by the Volkoff Canadian Ballet of Toronto.

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New York has not seen a production of *Peter Pan* since 1928, but this year it is to be revived with Vera Zorina in the title role.

*

HOLLYWOOD—*Never Fear*, the story of a dancer who is stricken with polio, is the name of the new film to be produced by Ida Lupino and her husband, Collier Young. In the leading roles will be Sally Forrest and Keefe Braselle; the dances will be staged by Billy Daniels.

Eager to do the Nancy Walker part in *Look, Ma, I'm Dancin'*! Ann Miller is attempting to convince the M.G.M. studios that they should purchase the screen rights.

CANADA

Canada's first professional ballet company, the WINNIPEG BALLET, gave a programme of ballet at the Monument National in Montreal on October 21, 22 and 23. The company's repertoire consisted of *Ballet Composite* with choreography by David Adams set to Brahm's Variations on a theme by Haydn; *Romance*, to music of Glazounov; exerpts from *Swan Lake*, Tchaikovsky; *Visages*, *Kaleidoscope* and *Chapter* 13. The company's principals are Jean McKensie and Arnold Spohr. Gordon Kushner and Edmund Assaly, pianists, provide the musical accompaniment. A tour of the United States, the West Indies and Australia were to have followed.

Sujata and Asoka, Indian dance team, gave a recital of classic Hindu dances at His Majesty's Theatre, Montreal, on November 16. The programme, which was actually a repeat performance of the one given in February, again managed to sustain the interest and admiration of a more than sympathetic audience.

AUSTRALIA

All those who remember that excellent Kathakali dancer, Shivaram, will be interested to know that he has been appearing with the Joyce Graeme company in Australia. His own numbers were, presumably, interpolated in the programme of classical ballet.

Katherine Dunham in the costume designed by her husband, John Pratt, for the new number Veracruzana *(Photo: Iris, Paris)*

Dancers You Should Know...

Jeanne Artois

IT is perhaps paradoxical that Jeanne Artois, outstanding dancer and soloist formerly with the de Basil Ballets Russes, is to appear in the new "cine-variety", four shows a day, at the Empire. A brief excursion into this promising young dancer's background reveals that her true course lies with one of the existing major ballet companies.

From the outset, Jeanne admits that the odds were with her. Her mother's one-time ambition to be a dancer was solidly transmitted to Jeanne. Encouraged too by her extremely adaptable physique (long shapely legs and a well proportioned body), Mrs. Beazley trotted her young daughter off to the Ripman School of Dancing.

Enthusiastic, but wisely cautious, Mrs. Beazley rationed Jeanne's lessons to one a week. When Jeanne's aptitude for ballet dancing became apparent, her mother steered her eager child into an intense schedule of dance training, still at the Ripman School. This involved six lessons a day plus several hours of additional practice. But as Jeanne said, "I enjoyed it so much that I never thought of it as work." This intensive training began when Jeanne was fourteen.

The ensuing three years consisted of an almost religious concentration on work; so that when Mona Inglesby clarioned for dancers to fill the ranks of her newly forming International Ballet, it was just a step from Ripman to Inglesby. It must have been obvious from the outset that Jeanne was no "run of the mill" dancer. Maître de Ballet, Stanislas Idzikowski, singled her out for a role in Fokine's *Carnaval*.

It was an encouraging step in the right direction. However, Jeanne's ambition was eventually to become a member of the then popular de Basil Company. Recognising her lack of experience as a major obstacle, Jeanne was determined to seek and acquire the polish that she hoped would soon make her acceptable to the Colonel.

A brief engagement in the *Anglo-Russian Merry-Go-Round*, featuring Nina Tarakanova with ballets by Harold Turner was followed by a tour of Italy in Leon Hepner's *Fortune Ballet*, which included several ballets by Andrée Howard. She then returned to England for an engagement as first dancer with the Anglo-Russian Ballet under the direction of Letitia Browne; this company later formed the nucleus of the Metropolitan Ballet.

By now Jeanne was beginning to spread her wings. She alternated with Sonia Arova and Colette Marchand in *Swan Lake* and the *Blue Bird* and *Aurora pas de deux*. Maître de Ballet, Victor Gzovsky, formerly of the Paris Opera and later with Les Ballets des Champs Elysées, gave her important roles in his ballets *Pygmalion* and *Dances of Galanta*.

During rehearsals of Frank Staff's *Lovers Gallery* for this same company, Jeanne's long awaited opportunity came. She was offered a job in the de Basil Ballets Russes and although she regretted abandoning the new role being created for her by Frank Staff, she left the company to join the Colonel.

November, 1947, to approximately November, 1948, was a gay, adventurous time for Jeanne. Not only did she visit Europe's capital cities and dance for foreign audiences, but she also had a number of coveted roles in the company's repertoire.

In *Les Femmes de Bonne Humeur* she was Constanza, the role created for Lubov Tchernicheva by Massine. She danced the part of Guile in *Paganini* and the Chief Slave in *Prince Igor*. It was a profitable, worthwhile experience for Jeanne. Her performance was acclaimed by critics in Paris, Barcelona and other cities in the company's tour.

Long periods of unemployment, dreaded by dancers, are not uncommon. Ballet, subsidised by an individual, vascillates from periods of opulence and prosperity to periods of mere subsistence and possibly failure, depending, of course, on the solvency of the individual subsidising it.

Consequently, when the de Basil empire capitulated Jeanne was not caught unawares. She grasped the opportunity to brush up and improve her technique. For six months she set herself a rigid schedule of dance classes at the studio of one of London's most prolific teachers, Vera Volkova.

On October 12, 1949, Jeanne was engaged by Frank Staff for the cine-variety shows opening at the Empire on Boxing Day. This will be a new experience for Jeanne as well as for London audiences.

Undismayed by the formidable working schedule that lies ahead (12.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.) she is only anxious for the success of this new venture. It will mean jobs for dancers who, like Jeanne, are frequently victims of decapitalised ballet organisations. **D. R.**

NEXT MONTH: TOMMY LINDEN

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RD

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December 19: Her Majesty's Theatre, Carlisle.
December 26: Tivoli, New Brighton.

St. James

December 12: Manchester.
Later in December, Cheltenham. Spring tour starts in January.

Ballet Negres

December 12: Dolphin Theatre, Brighton. Starting new tour on January 9: County Theatre, Hereford.
January 13: Torquay Pavilion.

Empire

At the Empire, Leicester Square, there will be four ballet performances daily, alternating with films, from Boxing Day.

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MUSIC—*continued from page 18*

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Published by HANSOM BOOKS LTD., Mersey House, 132-4 Fleet Street, London, E.C.4
and printed in England by PAGE BROS. (Norwich) Ltd.

TO WEHMAN BROS.

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Name.....

Address.....

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Name.....

Address.....

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Name.....

Address.....

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Name.....

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BALLET DATES

HERE is an "At-a-glance" Guide to show you where the English companies are at the moment. For further news and details of each company, see *Dance and Dancers at Home* pages.

Sadler's Wells

Re-opening at Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, on Boxing Day, with Ashton's *Cinderella*, which continues until January 7. *The Sleeping Beauty* returns to the programme on January 9 and will be given until January 21.

Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet

Continuing their winter season at Sadler's Wells Theatre, giving Saturday matinees and appearing in operas that require ballet. Up to the end of the year, Tuesday evening performances are being continued. Programmes for December:

Tuesday evening, December 20: *Casse Noisette*, Act II; *Beauty and the Beast; Capriol Suite; Selina.*

Monday evening, December 26: *Les Rendezvous; Beauty and the Beast; Capriol Suite; Casse Noisette*, Act II.

Tuesday matinee, December 27: *Le Lac des Cygnes*, Act II; *The Haunted Ballroom; Blue Bird, pas de deux; Les Rendezvous.*

Saturday matinee, December 31: *Les Sylphides; Selina; Beauty and the Beast; Facade.*

Ballet Rambert

December 5: Alexander Theatre, Birmingham.

December 12: New Theatre, Hull.

December 19: Festival Theatre, Malvern.

International

December 26: Trocadero, Elephant and Castle.

January 2: Gaumont State Theatre, Kilburn.

January 16: Hallenstadiom, Zurich. Nine performances including full-length *Coppelia, Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Princess.*

Metropolitan

Television programmes during December of a new production of *Salome* with choreography by Celia Franca; also a television performance of *Coppelia.*

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CLUBS

THIS column will be devoted to reporting the activities of ballet clubs throughout England. Club members are urged to forward all communications that may be of interest to other club members as well as to our regular readers—address: Dance and Dancers, Club Guide, c/o. the Editors, Mersey House, 132-4 Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

LONDON

London Ballet Circle (sec.: Stanley Hawkins, 47 Ashchurch-grove, London, W.12).

The London Ballet Circle boasts the largest membership in England, including members outside London and abroad. Members abroad are kept in touch by the Circle's bi-monthly publication *Petit Tour.* Activities include lectures, demonstrations on ballet technique, stage make-up and mime by various prominent personalities in ballet. Beginners' classes for members are given at the Studio, 26 West Street, by artists from major ballet companies and also by advanced students. The Circle is fortunate in having Ninette de Valois as its President. Honorary members include Leonide Massine, Margot Fonteyn, Robert Helpmann, Beryl Gray, Sally Gilmour, Alicia Alonzo and Leo Kersley.

MANCHESTER

Ballet Guild (sec.: Jeanette Whittaker, 122 Church-street, West Radcliffe).

The Ballet Guild, one of the senior organisations of this kind, was formed by two Manchester ballet teachers in March, 1944; its membership is composed mainly of young housewives, office girls, schoolgirls, and dancing teachers, but also includes amateur stage technicians and designers aided financially by interested members. Annual presentations of ballet evenings are made each spring and autumn. The Ballet Guild has twenty original productions to its credit already. Their most recent programme of ballet consisted of *Folk Tale* to Khachaturyan music; *Les Preludes* to the music of Liszt; *Faustos* to Tchaikovsky music, all choreographed by Miss G. McDonald.

NEWCASTLE

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Ballet Club (sec.: Mrs. Bowman, 1 Grosvenor-villas).

Ambitious programme put on by this Ballet Club at the Little Theatre, Gateshead, on November 18 and 19 consisted of three original ballets, a mime play and *divertissements.* Ballets presented were *Amid the Alien Corn* to music by Delius with choreography by Margor Hastings; *Pied Piper* based on Browning's poem to Bach music with choreography by Peggy Chaytor; and a third ballet, based on the traditional ballad *The Raggle Taggle Gypsy* was danced to a mixture of Dvorak and traditional music. *Pied Piper* won a club competition for the best work based on a poem.

OXFORD

Oxford University Ballet Club (sec.: Clive Barnes, St. Catherines).

Activities of the Oxford University Club are limited by the transient nature of its student members. Although it has temporarily halted ballet production, the club is still very active in other branches. Recent speakers at club meetings included Marie Rambert, Beryl Gray, Peggy van Praagh, Algeranoff, Alan Carter, Leo Kersley, A. V. Coton, Arnold Haskell and Roger Wood. Activities included the debate at Cambridge on November 20 with the Cambridge University Ballet Club and the organisation of ballet classes for club members. A club member is arranging the dances for a forthcoming University production of Gluck's opera *Iphigenia in Tauris.* A revival is planned of the club's war-time publication *Arabesque,* to be edited by Clive Barnes and John Percival. Patrons of Oxford University Ballet Club include Lord David Cecil, Lord Berners and Frederick Ashton, with Richard Buckle as President.

RICHMOND

Beverly Ballet Club (sec.: Jeanne Gibson, 20 Orchard-rise, Richmond, Surrey).

Beverly Ballet Club celebrated its first birthday on November 3. A party was held and members of all ballet clubs invited. This club has recently amalgamated with the local dramatic society and successful performances were given in October at the Twentieth Century theatre by the combined groups and other ballet clubs, with guest artists from the school of Miss Elsa Brunelleschi and also an Indian dancer, Miss Vilas Dalal.

WIMBLEDON

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